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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

09 JUN 1998

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-EP (1110)

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Major Subordinate Commands Quality Assurance Responsibilities

1. This memorandum reaffirms the Major Subordinate Commands (MSC) Quality Assurance (QA) focus areas presented to the Board of Directors on 5 February 1998. The MSC responsibilities subsequently provided are the minimum, "above the line," focus areas of responsibility that I consider essential to improve the execution of the MSC QA mission. All of these focus areas of responsibility should be on the MSC "must do" list.

2. Background. The MSCs have made great strides at transitioning to a QA organization. However, during this transition each MSC defined their duties a little differently and during the Command Inspections it became apparent that USACE needed to corporately agree on what minimum, "above the line," performance tasks each MSC must do for QA proficiency. Therefore, I asked SAD to coordinate with all the MSCs and develop a minimum number of MSC focus areas of responsibility. This effort resulted in nine focus areas that were presented to the Board of Directors, subsequently receiving their buy in. These nine "above the line" focus areas are the minimum MSC standard responsibilities. Each MSC is responsible for this minimum, and is strongly encouraged to do more. To accomplish these focus areas, each MSC must develop a team approach to quality management within the MSC and also between the districts and the MSC.

3. The nine MSC QA focus areas are:

**Focus Area #1: MSC Quality Management Plan – Action: Develop and Maintain.**  
Each MSC must develop a Quality Management Plan (QMP), outlining the policies and procedures that all functional areas within the MSC will follow for their QA activities and the quality management responsibilities of the districts.

**Focus Area #2: District Quality Management Plan – Action: Review and Approve.**  
The MSC must review and approve the district prepared QMP, which outlines the policies, procedures and responsibilities of all functional areas for producing quality products and services. The QMP covers the district's actions on both in-house products as well as A/E or other contracted work.

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**Focus Area #3: Quality Control Plans – Action: Approve/Monitor.** The MSC must establish a procedure to review and approve district Quality Control Plans (QCP) for decision and implementation documents. Ensure compliance with approved QCPs by periodically verifying the independence of technical review (ITR), resolution of comments, documentation, etc. The MSC must oversee the district QA role when the district conducts QA activities for A/E designs and other contracted products. This also includes oversight of district QA plan for monitoring construction contractors Quality Control Plan.

**Focus Area #4: District Quality Processes – Action: Audit and Report.** Review district products for QC Process Evaluation. This includes meeting periodically with districts to review their quality control processes through evaluation of selected products and services at various stages of development to assure compliance with the QMP. Feedback to the district on these quality assessment audits is essential for district process improvement as feedback to HQUSACE for lessons learned distribution throughout USACE.

**Focus Area #5: Performance Indicators – Action: Review and Evaluate.** Proactively track existing performance indicators and develop and maintain regional indicators as required. Identify areas needing command attention to assure a viable organization that is responsive to USACE customers through quality products.

**Focus Area #6: Product Development – Action: Continuous Involvement.** Participate in selected project meetings as required by policy guidance and as needed for high visibility and/or complex projects. MSCs are to assist in resolution of policy and/or technical issues and interface with HQUSACE as appropriate, approve deviations from criteria and conduct selected project site visits.

**Focus Area #7: Partner with District – Action: Coordinate and Mentor.** Provide for continuous dialog and interactions with counterparts to keep them informed of upcoming work, training, new regulations, etc. Also, develop and implement regional guidance, share lessons learned and facilitate changes in criteria, facilitate partnering and sharing of resources across districts and evaluate district technical capabilities and needs.

**Focus Area #8: Programming Activities – Action: Approve / Certify.** Continue coordination of all programming activities with HQUSACE and districts.

**Focus Area #9: Command and Staff Inspections – Action: Conduct and Provide Feedback.** Examine mission execution, level of training, FTE resources, workload, compliance with standards and regulations and obtain feedback on morale, welfare, discipline and problems / needs.

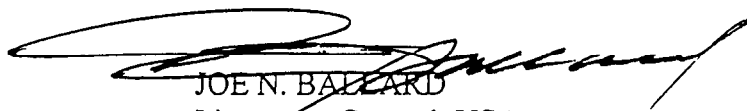
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4. Adherence to these focus areas by each MSC Commander will continuously improve the organizational quality efficiency making our customers aggressively request our assistance in engineering and construction work.
5. Guidance will be revised to reflect these minimum QA focus areas of MSC responsibility.

  
JOE N. BALLARD  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

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